

Brownfields 2006 Grant Fact Sheet



Kansas Department of Health and Environment

Wichita, Kansas

\$200,000 Petroleum Assessment Grant



The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has selected the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) for a \$200,000 brownfields assessment grant for petroleum. Petroleum grant funds will be used to conduct Phase I and II environmental site assessments on properties in Wichita's 21st Street North Corridor and coordination of community outreach.

Over the last year and a half, KDHE has worked closely with the City of Wichita to evaluate ways to promote redevelopment in certain underutilized commercial/industrial corridors located in Wichita, particularly the 21st Street Corridor. The city has prepared a Revitalization Plan for the area highlighting proposed redevelopment areas. Previous assessment activities at other properties in the corridor have identified that many potential petroleum impacted properties exist in the corridor.

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

On behalf of Wichita (population 344,284) located in south central Kansas, the state will help assess brownfields in the project area that includes a significant number of Wichita's older industrial sites, including a refinery. Previous inventories have identified over 100 parcels in the project area. The aircraft manufacturing sector was Wichita's economic engine until 1998 when manufacturing dramatically slowed. Between 2001 and 2003, over 14,000 manufacturing jobs were lost in the Wichita area, and in one year alone, the city's unemployment rate rose 54 percent. In 2000, the median family income was 31 percent less than other Wichita areas. Minorities, predominantly Hispanics, represent 59 percent of the population in the project area. Exiting businesses have left behind vacant and underused properties. Although environmental conditions on many sites are unknown, trichloroethene, vinyl chloride, carbon tetrachloride, benzene, and other volatile organic compounds are known to be present on many sites within the corridor.

After existing contamination is addressed, these sites will be reused for light industry, a transportation hub, and openspace that supports local cultural activities. Brownfields redevelopment will remove environmental hazards, promote smart growth, create greenspace, generate new jobs, and help retain population.

For further information, including specific grant contacts, additional grant information, brownfields news, events, publications, and links visit the EPA Brownfields web site at: www.epa.gov/brownfields.

KDHE

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